

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

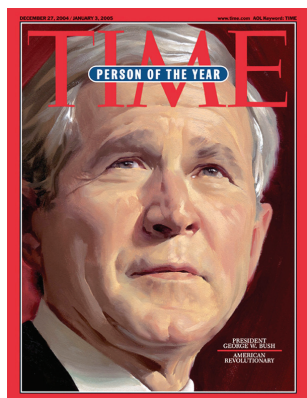
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INSIDE



Person of the Year

After winning re-election and "re-shaping the rules of politics to fit his 10-gallon-hat leadership style," President George Bush for the second time was chosen as Time magazine's Person of the Year.

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Car Bombs

Car bombs tore through a Najaf funeral procession and Karbala's main bus station Sunday, killing at least 60 people and wounding more than 120 in the two Shiite holy cities.

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Tottotville homes defective

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Less than five years after it built the so-called model housing units in Tottotville, the government faces complaints by homeowners of leaks, apparently caused by defective construction.

Documents obtained by the *Saipan Tribune* showed Tottotville homeowners complaining of water leaks from ceilings, window sills, and exterior doors;

water-damaged rear service doors due to lack of roof protection; rattling water pipe sounds on dry wall locations; peeling off paint on concrete ceilings; and damaged roof tiles.

An occupant complained of water seeping in from the floor to wall connection during heavy rains, when water forms a pond outside the wall.

Another homeowner complained of leaks in the ceiling, possibly from a crack

on the concrete roof, a leak on the ceiling between the master bedroom and toilet, a leak underneath the kitchen sink, a hole on the outside wall, water traces and wall paint bubbles, loose kitchen door pulls, and separation between concrete wall and wooden closet framings.

There are about 45 homeowners currently live in Tottotville, the first subdivision built by the Northern Marianas Housing Corp. in 2000 primarily for low- to moderate-income families.

The units were awarded through a lottery conducted by NMHC a few years back.

When it opened, Tottotville was hailed by both government and private authorities as a model subdivision: fully paved, with a basketball court, and 24-hour water and electricity.

The uniformly designed houses—each unit contains two bedrooms and a garage—were designed by the Hawaii-based SSFM company and were built by

See **TOTTOTVILLE** on Page 12

Mixed outlook seen on holiday spending

First of three parts

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER



Forty-two-year-old Vicky Sers Nicholas, a resident of Lower Gualo Rai, scanned racks of toys at the Joeten Shopping Center in Susupe, while holding an infant dress that she would give her godchild as a Christmas present.

A usual spender every holiday season, Nicholas said she decided to cut back on expenses this Christmas, holding off plans to shop on Guam, which she did last year.

Sers Nicholas said she would spend about \$2,000 to \$3,000 for the holidays, much less than some \$8,000 she spent last Christmas season.

"I'm not buying electronic games anymore," she said. This year, she said she would rather buy family games to save on cost and yet spend a good time with her family during the holidays.

"This Christmas, we're more careful with what we're buying. We try to get more for what we buy. We want to make sure that they have value," she explained.

The same refrain was echoed by others, opting for holiday spending that is more modest in scale than last year's. Forty-year-old Bonnie Sagana, a Filipino contract worker, said he would slice his budget for the holidays by half. Last year, Sagana claimed spending about \$600 for gifts and *noche buena*. He said he would only spend about \$300 this time.

"We are uncertain if the economy will decline due to the anticipated hardship by the garment sector," he said, noting

See **MIXED** on Page 12



Court subpoenas Babauta, Brown, others

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Superior Court subpoenaed yesterday several government officials, including Gov. Juan N. Babauta and attorney general Pamela Brown, to produce documents and testify in court in connection with the lawsuit that seeks to block the drawdown of some \$3.45 million in land compensation claim by the Malite estate against the government.

The court compelled the officials to appear in the courtroom of Associate Judge Juan T. Lizama on Thursday, Dec. 23—the same day when the temporary

restraining order that froze the release of compensation claim expires.

Lizama denied yesterday the request of Brown's attorneys to extend the effectivity of the TRO.

"The cause cited by the government—the coming holidays—is insufficient to justify an extension," Lizama ruled.

Without a valid TRO or permanent injunction, nothing forbids the Commonwealth Development Authority from releasing the \$3.45 million drawdown from the government's Land Compensation Fund.

The judge tasked Brown's attorneys, led by assistant attorney general Benjamin

Sachs, to submit a request for preliminary injunction until the closing of government hours yesterday. Lizama said that the request would be heard by the court also on Thursday if it is timely filed.

Attorneys for the MPLA, its board and acting commissioner initiated yesterday the issuance of subpoenas to various government officials, including the governor. The court also ordered the officials to produce pertinent documents that are in their possession, custody or control.

Other officials asked to appear in court included Sachs, assistant attorney general Daniel L. Furrh, CDA board chair

See **COURT** on Page 12

Lucky couple claims \$100K lotto prize

By MARCONI CALINDAS
REPORTER

The lucky couple who won the biggest jackpot ever in the history of the Marianas Lottery turned up yesterday at the lottery office to claim their prize—a whopping \$100,000—which they said they plan to use to first pay off their debts and then finish the construction of their house.

See **LUCKY** on Page 12

Local

Judge: BoS should shoulder Fennell’s legal defense cost

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Superior Court judge Juan T. Lizama yesterday granted the request of former Bank of Saipan receiver Randall Fennell to have the bank pick up the tab for his legal defense, in connection with an appeal that the bank’s directors have taken to the Supreme Court.

In that appeal, the bank’s directors appealed retired Superior Court presiding judge Edward Manibusan’s decision that gave Fennell blanket immunity from future lawsuits that might arise and that ordered the bank to indemnify Fennell in case such legal actions are resorted to.

Lizama ordered that an accounting of fees and costs for

which Fennell seeks payment, including an estimate of future fees and costs, if any, be completed within 60 days.

The judge set a 30-day deadline to entertain the filing of any objection to the amount of fees determined after accounting, from the time the fee statement is served on the parties.

Lizama noted that even current bank receiver Antonio

Muna approved payment of Fennell’s fees.

“Mr. Muna notes that he himself might be in a position of having an order involving him appealed by the directors, for example an order approving payment of his fees,” Lizama narrated. “In such a case, he argues, he should not be required to pay to defend that order out of his own pocket.”

“It is easy to imagine a scenario where such an appeal might arise after Mr. Muna has been discharged. He might then be left without protection. This possibility [is] a serious threat to the independence of the receiver,” the judge said.

Lizama approved Fennell’s request for the bank to pay costs incurred in his legal defense as an assurance to the current receiver and future receivers who

might be appointed that they would not shoulder the costs of defending court orders relating to the receivership.

Lizama’s ruling came out despite the objection of the bank’s board, which argued that Manibusan’s exoneration order in favor of Fennell remains pending on appeal before the Supreme Court. The board reportedly argued that the bank should not be required to pay Fennell’s costs in defending an order, the validity of which it is assailing before the High Court.

The court noted the board’s argument that the appropriate time to determine the propriety of payment of fees requested by Fennell is when the appeal has concluded. “The directors argue that it is sensible to wait for the matter to be resolved because of the difficulty of recovering any

fees ‘prepaid’ against the possibility that Mr. Fennell will prevail.”

The court, however, favored Fennell, who cited public policy on the need to indemnify receivers to allow them to perform their tasks. As receiver, Fennell reportedly argued that a lawsuit against him would be likely.

The court also noted Fennell’s argument that he was being sued in connection with his official actions as bank receiver.

Besides appealing Fennell’s exoneration, the bank’s board has also sued the former receiver at the Superior Court, accusing him and his attorneys of breaching their fiduciary duties to the bank. During his receivership tenure, Fennell pushed for the liquidation of the bank’s assets to pay off depositors, instead of rehabilitating the financial institution.

CUC urged to borrow \$5.5M for Plumeria’s infrastructure

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta is pushing the cash-strapped Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to borrow \$5.5 million to fund the utility and roadways infrastructure of the government’s Plumeria Estates housing project.

Over the past month, Babauta has twice written to urge the CUC board of directors to approve the proposed loan, saying that the board’s inaction on his request may jeopardize the implementation of the housing project.

In a Nov. 23 letter, Babauta informed CUC chair Francisco Q. Guerrero that the Housing Task Force has received proposals from two companies interested in constructing 128 residential houses and infrastructure for Plumeria Estates.

Babauta said, however, that HTF could not award the contract to any of the two bidders until funding for the infrastructure improvements is secured.

The government does not want to pass on the cost of infrastructure construction to the would-be homeowners, as that would inflate the price of the houses.

Babauta said that during discussions between his office, HTF, CUC, and the Marianas

Public Land Trust, it has been agreed upon that CUC would borrow \$5.5 million from MPLT.

Citing CUC estimates, he said \$2.2 million of the loan will go to CUC to construct the sewer lines, water lines, and power lines at Plumeria Estates.

“This infrastructure is CUC responsibility,” Babauta said, adding that the repayment of the \$2.2 million will be guaranteed from the utility charges of the 128 houses.

CUC data showed that 90 percent of CUC’s residential customers consume 2,000 kwh or less electricity per month. Based on the 11-cent per kwh residential rate, a customer who uses 2,000 kwh a month pays about \$220 in basic charges.

Even if each Plumeria Estates homeowner consumes 2,000 kwh a month, it would take CUC almost six years to collect the \$2.2 million it needs to repay MPLT.

Babauta said the Office of the Governor will guaranty repayment of the \$3.3 million balance, which will provide for the roads and drainage construction.

“It is important that the CUC board of directors approves this proposal as early as possible so that construc-

tion of 128 residential houses may start,” Babauta said.

The governor sent a follow-up letter to CUC on Dec. 10, after receiving no response from the board.

“I want to emphasize how important this project is to our community and further delay may jeopardize the implementation of this housing project because of the inaction of the CUC board to my request,” Babauta said.


He gave the board until today to act on the proposal.

The Babauta administration initially asked the Marianas Public Lands Authority to fund the infrastructure for the housing project. But the central government eventually backtracked on its request, saying it planned to look for alternative funding sources for the project.

The Plumeria Estates project involves the construction of new houses on approximately 13 hectares of land in Koblerville. Up to seven different styles of residential homes will be built based on plans and specifications provided by the Northern Marianas Housing Commission.

A total of 128 houses with two-, three-, and four-bedroom units will be available to first-time homeowners at a low price.

VERIZON
CMYK



The Saipan Tribune accepts contributed photos of holidays, weddings, baptisms, and other community and family events for free publication. Material submitted should be original and not copyrighted, in digital or print format. Most include a caption containing complete details for description of the event, location of the persons in the photos, the date, and the place, the name of the contributor, and a contact number. The Saipan Tribune reserves the right to edit the caption, the date of publication and the date of the picture. Contributors are e-mail their submissions to editor@saipantribune.com. To check if contributions are received, call 223-6207, 223-3446, or 223-4743.

‘Saipan stores, restaurants fencing stolen garments’

Apparel items being stolen from Saipan factories are turning up in retail stores and restaurants on the island, where they are being sold at bargain basement prices, according to the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association.

The association said these stores are aware that the items are stolen and buy them in shady transactions that rob the government of potential revenue.

SGMA executive director Richard A. Pierce said the association has already identified and approached “four or five” establishments in San Antonio and Garapan selling goods still labeled with brands “that would never allow them to be sold without their permission.”

Pierce is urging the CNMI

government to help it rid the CNMI of this illegal practice and has called on the Babauta administration to partner with the industry in stamping out this fencing activity.

This came about soon after Pierce met with four board members of the association to discuss the matter.

Pierce has asked the CNMI Attorney General’s Office, and the AGO’s Consumer Protection Agency Office, CNMI Customs Service Division, CNMI Revenue and Taxation and the Department of Public Safety to organize enforcement efforts to stop the illegal sales of items manufactured in Saipan factories that have made their way into bargain sales bins around the island.

“SGMA knows these \$3 and

\$5 apparel items have been stolen from the factories. They are being purchased behind the scenes, stores are buying them knowing they are stolen, they are selling them in the open, excise and business gross receipts taxes are not being paid, and legitimate retailers are being deprived of legitimate sales,” Pierce said.

SGMA believes that if the CNMI Customs Service Division’s enforcement officers are properly trained on how to identify these merchandise on display—and SGMA has offered to provide that training—they can stop the trafficking in stolen goods.

“Our shirts are being stolen, taxes not being paid by the stores turning them over, and Revenue and Tax is not receiving the re-

ceipts tax they deserve because the merchant isn’t reporting the transaction from front to back,” according to Pierce.

In letters addressed to the AGO, Customs and Finance’s Revenue and Tax, Pierce wrote, “We want it stopped. The CNMI government has to step in here. They are the ones losing the tax dollars, not us.”

He said the association would inform the government where these stolen items are being sold,

train personnel on identification techniques and accompany enforcement officers on “sting operations” where they can catch the vendors red-handed.

SGMA believes that the enforcement work will net the CNMI additional tax revenue and lessen the demand for any stolen merchandise.

PHI

Veteran finally gets military funeral

By MARCONI CALINDAS
REPORTER

A military veteran who died in October this year, whose body had lain unclaimed for nearly two months at the local hospital’s morgue, will finally be put to rest.

Richard Klase was found dead last Oct. 30, 2004, at his home by a close friend, Andre Kozqotzi, who teaches Science part-time at the Northern Marianas College.

Klase was 64 and had died of natural cause.

Kozqotzi had brought Klase’s

body to the Commonwealth Health Center, where it had remained in the morgue since then. Nobody had come forward to claim the body as Klase was single and had no family on Saipan. It was not known how long he had stayed on Saipan. He was a former Marine officer.

The Veterans Affairs Office on Guam recently called Martin Manglona, also a veteran, and informed him of Klase’s case. Although not related to Klase, Manglona immediately tried to find Klase’s immediate family and was able to speak with the

sister in Oregon, and the father, 87, who also happened to have served the U.S. military during World War II.

Manglona then went to the Department of Public Works, the Saipan Mayor’s Office and the church to get assistance for Klase. He shouldered the hospital fees so that Klase’s body could be released for interment.

The body will be picked up this Wednesday at 10:30am prior to interment at the Capitol Public Cemetery at 11 am.

Seven military officers will

See VETERAN on Page 12

CARS UNLIMITED

CARWASH

SAM

TRIPLE J
CMYK

COMMUNITY Briefs

Chacha Oceanview shortens classes today

This is to inform students, parents, guardians and the general public that Chacha Oceanview Junior High School will be having a shortened class schedule today, Dec. 21, 2004. Classes will begin at 8am and will end at 1pm. We are asking all parents and guardians of students who do not ride the bus to pick up their child(ren) at 1pm. If you have any questions call the school at 664-4100, 4103 or 4106.

KagES Christmas Pageant today

The Kagman Elementary School Christmas Pageant will be held today, Dec. 21, 2004, from 4:30pm to 6:30pm. This year's program will take place on the grassy knoll in front of the school, where the stage is located. The public is invited to bring chairs, blankets/mats, and umbrellas. Refreshments will be sold that evening by students/teachers who are raising funds to go on their Close-up trip to Washington D.C. Point of contact is Olive Camacho, at 664-3915.

Lemonade Stand orders are in! If you have not picked up your order, you have until Monday, Dec. 20, 2004. Any orders not paid and picked up by 4:30pm of Dec. 20 will be sold to the public on Dec. 21.

Reminder to All Kagman Elementary School students/parents/guardians: Last day of school will be on Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2004. Classes resume on Jan. 11, 2005.

Big Fish holiday schedule

Big Fish Creative Inc. would like to inform its clients and vendors that its office will be closed on the following days:

Christmas Holiday—Dec. 23, 2004 (close at noon)

Dec. 24, 2004

New Year's Holiday—Dec. 30, 2004 (close at noon)

Dec. 31, 2004

Its normal office hours are Monday to Friday (8am to 5:30pm). Should you have any questions or concerns, contact your Big Fish Creative, Inc. representative.

2004 W-2CM forms distribution ongoing

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI employers that the distribution of the 2004 W-2CM forms and Instructions has started and is now ongoing.

All businesses and employers are asked, to pick up forms during the regular business hours, from 8am to 4pm at the office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Dandan Commercial Center. The deadline for filing 2004 W-2CM form is Feb. 28, 2005 at 4:30pm.

Public notice to first time homeowners

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. said that it is extending the deadline for first time homeowners to submit housing loan applications for the Plumera Estates.

NMHC encourages all interested applicants to pick up an application at its central office in Garapan, Monday through Friday from 7:30am to 4:30pm, except holidays, and to have the applications submitted as soon as they can. For any inquiries on the matter, call one of NMHC's loan officers at 234-9447/7689/7670.

Upcoming event at Hopwood

Wednesday, Dec. 22: Last day of school before Christmas break. School resumes Tuesday, Jan. 11, 2005.

Head Start Program enrollment start

Enroll your child now! Head Start provides children with activities that help them grow mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically. The Head Start staff recognize that, as parents, you are the first and most important teachers of your children. They will welcome your involvement in Head Start activities, and will work as partners with you to help your child progress. Your child will leave Head Start more prepared for kindergarten, excited about learning, and ready to succeed.

Open slots are at the following centers:

San Antonio-PM session

San Vicente-PM session

Capitol Hill-PM session

Capitol Hill-AM session

Kagman III-PM session

Kagman II-PM & AM session

Chalan Kanoa-AM session

Summer college internships available

The NMI Council for the Humanities wishes to advise the general public of the availability of federal internships for the summer of 2005.

The program, sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, is open to college students entering their junior or senior years in the fall of 2005. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or foreign nationals who have been legal residents in the United States for at least three years. Non-U.S. residents of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands are also eligible to participate in this program.

The NEH will provide interns \$4,000 for 10 weeks of work in Washington, D.C.

The deadline for applications is Jan. 5, 2005. Interested individuals may submit their applications online at <http://www.neh.gov/interns/guidelines.html>. Questions about this intern program should be directed to the Internship Coordinator at internships@neh.gov.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 7, 2004

DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
Saipan-Saipan				Saipan-Saipan			
CO 900	8:00am	8:45pm	1,3	CO 901	7:00pm	7:45pm	1,3,4,5,7
CO 902	8:15am	8:55pm	4,7	CO 902	7:55pm	8:45pm	2
CO 903	8:30am	9:10pm	2,6	CO 903	8:00pm	8:50pm	1,4,5,7
CO 904	8:45am	9:25pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 904	8:15pm	9:05pm	1,4,5,7
CO 905	9:00am	9:40pm	1	CO 905	8:30pm	9:20pm	1,5,7
CO 906	9:15am	9:55pm	1,4,7	CO 906	8:45pm	9:35pm	1,5
CO 907	9:30am	10:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 907	9:00pm	9:50pm	1,5
CO 908	9:45am	10:25pm	1,4,7	CO 908	9:15pm	10:05pm	1,5,7
CO 909	9:50am	10:30pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 909	9:30pm	10:20pm	1,5,7
CO 910	10:00am	10:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 910	9:45pm	10:35pm	1,5,7
CO 911	10:15am	10:55pm	1,4,7	CO 911	10:00pm	10:50pm	1,5,7
CO 912	10:30am	11:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 912	10:15pm	11:05pm	1,5,7
CO 913	10:45am	11:25pm	1,4,7	CO 913	10:30pm	11:20pm	1,5,7
CO 914	11:00am	11:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 914	10:45pm	11:35pm	1,5,7
CO 915	11:15am	11:55pm	1,4,7	CO 915	11:00pm	11:50pm	1,5,7
CO 916	11:30am	12:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 916	11:15pm	12:05pm	1,5,7
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CO 921	12:45pm	1:25pm	1,4,7	CO 921	12:30pm	1:20pm	1,5,7
CO 922	1:00pm	1:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 922	12:45pm	1:35pm	1,5,7
CO 923	1:15pm	1:55pm	1,4,7	CO 923	1:00pm	1:50pm	1,5,7
CO 924	1:30pm	2:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 924	1:15pm	2:05pm	1,5,7
CO 925	1:45pm	2:25pm	1,4,7	CO 925	1:30pm	2:20pm	1,5,7
CO 926	2:00pm	2:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 926	1:45pm	2:35pm	1,5,7
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CO 936	4:30pm	5:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 936	4:15pm	5:05pm	1,5,7
CO 937	4:45pm	5:25pm	1,4,7	CO 937	4:30pm	5:20pm	1,5,7
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CO 946	7:00pm	7:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 946	6:45pm	7:35pm	1,5,7
CO 947	7:15pm	7:55pm	1,4,7	CO 947	7:00pm	7:50pm	1,5,7
CO 948	7:30pm	8:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 948	7:15pm	8:05pm	1,5,7
CO 949	7:45pm	8:25pm	1,4,7	CO 949	7:30pm	8:20pm	1,5,7
CO 950	8:00pm	8:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 950	7:45pm	8:35pm	1,5,7
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CO 965	11:45pm	12:25pm	1,4,7	CO 965	11:30pm	12:20pm	1,5,7
CO 966	12:00pm	12:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 966	11:45pm	12:35pm	1,5,7
CO 967	12:15pm	12:55pm	1,4,7	CO 967	12:00pm	12:50pm	1,5,7
CO 968	12:30pm	1:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 968	12:15pm	1:05pm	1,5,7
CO 969	12:45pm	1:25pm	1,4,7	CO 969	12:30pm	1:20pm	1,5,7
CO 970	1:00pm	1:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 970	12:45pm	1:35pm	1,5,7
CO 971	1:15pm	1:55pm	1,4,7	CO 971	1:00pm	1:50pm	1,5,7
CO 972	1:30pm	2:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 972	1:15pm	2:05pm	1,5,7
CO 973	1:45pm	2:25pm	1,4,7	CO 973	1:30pm	2:20pm	1,5,7
CO 974	2:00pm	2:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 974	1:45pm	2:35pm	1,5,7
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CO 976	2:30pm	3:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 976	2:15pm	3:05pm	1,5,7
CO 977	2:45pm	3:25pm	1,4,7	CO 977	2:30pm	3:20pm	1,5,7
CO 978	3:00pm	3:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 978	2:45pm	3:35pm	1,5,7
CO 979	3:15pm	3:55pm	1,4,7	CO 979	3:00pm	3:50pm	1,5,7
CO 980	3:30pm	4:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 980	3:15pm	4:05pm	1,5,7
CO 981	3:45pm	4:25pm	1,4,7	CO 981	3:30pm	4:20pm	1,5,7
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CO 995	7:15pm	7:55pm	1,4,7	CO 995	7:00pm	7:50pm	1,5,7
CO 996	7:30pm	8:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 996	7:15pm	8:05pm	1,5,7
CO 997	7:45pm	8:25pm	1,4,7	CO 997	7:30pm	8:20pm	1,5,7
CO 998	8:00pm	8:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 998	7:45pm	8:35pm	1,5,7
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CO 1000	8:30pm	9:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1000	8:15pm	9:05pm	1,5,7
CO 1001	8:45pm	9:25pm	1,4,7	CO 1001	8:30pm	9:20pm	1,5,7
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CO 1006	10:00pm	10:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1006	9:45pm	10:35pm	1,5,7
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CO 1008	10:30pm	11:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1008	10:15pm	11:05pm	1,5,7
CO 1009	10:45pm	11:25pm	1,4,7	CO 1009	10:30pm	11:20pm	1,5,7
CO 1010	11:00pm	11:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1010	10:45pm	11:35pm	1,5,7
CO 1011	11:15pm	11:55pm	1,4,7	CO 1011	11:00pm	11:50pm	1,5,7
CO 1012	11:30pm	12:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1012	11:15pm	12:05pm	1,5,7
CO 1013	11:45pm	12:25pm	1,4,7	CO 1013	11:30pm	12:20pm	1,5,7
CO 1014	12:00pm	12:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1014	11:45pm	12:35pm	1,5,7
CO 1015	12:15pm	12:55pm	1,4,7	CO 1015	12:00pm	12:50pm	1,5,7
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CO 1017	12:45pm	1:25pm	1,4,7	CO 1017	12:30pm	1:20pm	1,5,7
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CO 1019	1:15pm	1:55pm	1,4,7	CO 1019	1:00pm	1:50pm	1,5,7
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CO 1022	2:00pm	2:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1022	1:45pm	2:35pm	1,5,7
CO 1023	2:15pm	2:55pm	1,4,7	CO 1023	2:00pm	2:50pm	1,5,7
CO 1024	2:30pm	3:10pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1024	2:15pm	3:05pm	1,5,7
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CO 1033	4:45pm	5:25pm	1,4,7	CO 1033	4:30pm	5:20pm	1,5,7
CO 1034	5:00pm	5:40pm	1,3,4,5,6,7	CO 1034	4:45pm	5:35pm	1,5,7
CO 1035	5:15pm	5:55pm	1,4,7	CO 1035	5:00pm	5:50pm	1,5,7
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CO 1037	5:45pm	6:25pm	1,4,7	CO 1037	5:30pm	6:20pm	1,5,7
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CO 1039	6:15pm	6:55pm	1,4,7	CO 1039	6:00pm	6:50pm	1,5,7
CO 1040	6:30pm	7:					

‘No ban on Chinese tourists in Rota’

GES students spilling over to the nearby MIHA homes

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

For the past years, several students enrolled at the Garapan Elementary School have been occupying MIHA units adjacent to the school campus due to a shortage of available classrooms.

It is for this reason that the Public School System insists that it needs \$922,960 in Compact Impact funds for the construction of about six new classrooms at the school to meet the demands of a growing student population.

“The Garapan Elementary School expansion project will help alleviate the overcrowding at GES, which has a growing school enrollment of 875 students,” education commissioner Rita H. Inos and Board of Education chair Roman Benavente said in their letter to Gov. Juan N. Babauta.

Three of the school’s kindergarten classes and two first grade classes are among those who have been occupying units at the MIHA housing area.

According to acting education commissioner Dr. David Borja, the project is listed in PSS’s seven-year capital improvement project plan and has been one of its priority projects.

Borja said the reason the mentioned classes are occupying units outside the school campus is because of overcrowding, citing that the school was designed to accommodate about 600 students only.

“I’m glad we have the

housing to accommodate the students, but our main goal is to bring the kids back to campus where they really belong,” Borja said during an interview yesterday.

Borja reiterated that PSS is “budget driven” and the only reason the expansion of the school has yet to become a reality is because of lack of funds.

“We need to address the [school’s] population and the needs of the community,” he said.

A source said all classrooms at the school are currently occupied, with the exception of one classroom, which sustained damage from previous typhoons. The source said the classroom is not safe because it “really got wet.”

Meanwhile, other projects in the PSS seven-year CIP priority list for Saipan and the Northern Islands are the construction of another school campus for Kagman Elementary School costing about \$6.5 million; Saipan Head Start (\$1.49 million); Dandan Elementary School expansion (\$920,220); Kagman High School expansion (\$4.143 million); Saipan Southern High School expansion (\$4.48 million); San Vicente Elementary School (\$1 million); Koblerville Elementary School (\$576,850); As Matuis Elementary School (\$6.5 million); Oleai Elementary School (\$922,960); Tanapag Elementary School (\$379,240); Hopwood Junior High School (\$2.5 million); Marianas High School (\$350,000); Marpi Secondary School (\$7 million); Northern Islands (\$950,000).

Babauta may issue order to separate sewer and water

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta is inclined to issue an executive order to effect the separation of sewer and water divisions from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. if the needed legislative amendment is delayed.

“The way to separate it is through legislation, but if it’s going to take a long time, I’d issue an executive order. That’s being contemplated,” said Babauta in an interview.

Babauta, who flew to Hawaii Wednesday for a two-day trip, said he met with the engineers and officials of the State of Hawaii Water and Sewer Department to consult them on the separation of services.

“We want to learn from them,” said the governor.

Right now, he said, his administration sees the separation of both services as “the way to go.”

Earlier, the CUC board of di-

rectors adopted a resolution urging the Babauta administration to propose to the Legislature an amendment to the CUC Act to remove the water and sewer operations from the utility firm’s responsibility.

This leaves CUC with the management of only one area—power generation and distribution—which is the only money-making branch of the corporation.

The CUC board said that getting rid of the sewer and water services would promote efficiency in the delivery of these programs.

CUC said that the Legislature may create a separate entity—which may be called the “CNMI Waterworks Authority”—to manage the operation of water and sewer services.

The proposed authority would be placed under the CNMI central government, while the CUC would continue to be an autonomous agency.

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

There is no such ban on Chinese tourists going to Rota as indicated in earlier reports, according to Gov. Juan N. Babauta.

“Not at all. I have no idea about that,” said Babauta in an interview.

He said that federal officials, in fact, have begun calling the CNMI Office of Homeland Security to inquire about the reported restriction on the entry of Chinese tourists to Rota.

“They’re asking if that’s true. As far as we know there’s no ban,” said the governor.

The Rota Legislative Delegation has questioned the re-

ported ban on Chinese tourists to their island.

In a Dec. 17 letter to Babauta, Rota Sen. Diego M. Songao said the decision to bar Chinese tourists from Rota is unfair and irrational and would have devastating effects on the island’s economy.

“If you, as governor, are concerned about Rota’s ability to adequately police the Commonwealth’s southern border, then please help us provide a plan to increase security there... but do not discriminate against your fellow citizens from Rota. We are one Commonwealth. We should certainly act like it. Please do not deny the people of Rota from benefiting from all the hard work your administra-

tion has put forth in obtaining [approved destination] status for the CNMI,” Songao said.

This came after Marianas Visitors Authority board chair David Sablan reportedly announced during an MVA membership meeting that based on talks between Babauta and federal officials, the movement of Chinese tourists would be confined to Saipan and Tinian “for defense reasons.”

This is in view of the anticipated influx of Chinese tourists with the formal signing this month of the ADS agreement between CNMI and China.

With the approved destination status, MVA projects to bring in at least 55,000 Chinese tourists in fiscal year 2005.

PIC

House minority to block lease extension initiatives

By **LIBERTY DONES**
REPORTER

The minority bloc in the House of Representatives is opposing the passage of two initiatives that aim to extend land leases up to 75 years.

House minority leader Rep. Arnold I. Palacios said his group does not support Senate Legislative Initiative 14-3, which seeks to extend land leases of private land from 55 years to 75 years, as well as House Legislative Initiative 14-10, which extends public land leases from 25 years to 50 years.

“We might as well sell it if we extend it to 75 years,” quipped Palacios yesterday.

He said efforts to extend land

leases are a way of disenfranchising the indigenous people in the Commonwealth.

“We’re opposing it because we don’t believe it’s necessary to dilute the land alienation provision in the Constitution. This is indigenous land, very limited, very scarce, very valuable and we can’t afford to play with it,” said Palacios.

Citing land alienation as reason for the CNMI’s poor economic showing is a lame excuse, he said.

“That’s a lame disguise to eventually disenfranchise the indigenous people. As elected officials, we are here to protect the rights of our indigenous community,” he said.

SLI 14-3, authored by Rota

Sen. Diego Songao, amends Article 12 of the CNMI Constitution.

It said that extending land lease period from 55 to 75 years “will revitalize major investments projects in the Commonwealth.”

“Such change will also revive the real estate market, benefiting landowners, real estate brokers, and investors,” it said.

It further said that longer lease period will facilitate banking and other lending institutions in funding major development loans, mortgages, and enhance business opportunities as a whole.

Meantime, HLI 14-10, introduced by House Committee on Commerce chair Rep. Martin

Ada, aims to amend Article 11 of the Constitution to increase the leasehold interests in public lands from 25 to 50 years.

Ada, in the proposal, cited that government leases such as Hyatt Regency and Grand Hotel would be expiring soon and the government “will be left with the dilemma of disposing of such developed properties.”

Ada believes that the government is not capable or competent to manage such properties.

“Accordingly, it would be in the best interest of the Commonwealth to increase the term of leases of public lands so as to allow the proper people or entities to manage such developed properties or establishments,” he said.

He said that extending it to 50

years would further create stability within the local real estate market and generate revenues for the Commonwealth.

If voted by three-fourths of the members of each house, the initiatives would be placed on

the ballot for the people to ratify at the next general election.

SLI 14-3 has passed the Senate and is now up for discussion at the House during a session today. The House, meantime, has adopted HLI 14-10.



IN APPRECIATION CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Northern Marianas College president Tony V. Deleon Guerrero, left, presents a plaque of appreciation to instructor Reginald M. Newport, who retired from the college after over 18 years and 6 months of service. Newport is one of eight NMC employees who retired. They were honored in a retirement ceremony on Dec. 10.

Public schools resume classes

Public schools are back to regular schedule today following a one-day break brought on by Tropical Storm Noru.

As of 1pm yesterday, the center of Noru was located about 50 miles northeast of Alamagan, 40 miles east of Pagan, and 60 miles south-southeast of Agrigan.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta still maintained Tropical Storm Condition I for the mentioned islands as of 2:30pm.

“Because Tropical Storm Noru is still considered a threat to the Northern Islands of Agrihan, Pagan, and Alamagan, [Babauta] is advising the residents...to remain indoors as damaging winds approaches,” the Emergency Management Office said.

The storm is moving north

at 14 miles per hour and is expected to continue doing so for the next 12 hours with further increasing forward speed, according to EMO. Maximum sustained winds are 65 miles per hour, with damaging winds up to 90 miles per hour. It will continue to intensify over the next 24 hours.

Residents of Saipan, Tinian, and Rota are urged to refrain from coastal and beach areas due to high surf—10 to 13 feet—which could build to a hazardous 13 to 16 feet.

The tropical storm brought heavy rainfall, causing flash floods in various areas.

For more information, contact EMO at 322-0222/0220 or visit its website at www.cnmiemo.gov.mp. *(Shan Seman)*

Molokai wins Hawaiian language contest

KAANAPALI, Molokai, Hawaii (The Maui News/PIR)—Molokai High School captured the overall and Hawaiian-language awards at Na Mele O Maui Student Song and High School Art Competitions at the Hyatt Regency Maui Resort & Spa on Dec. 3.

Angella Arakaki, a Baldwin High School senior, won the koa “best in show” award plaque for her artwork.

Eighteen schools and more than 900 students competed in the contests, whose theme was “‘O Makou Na Waiho’olu’u O Ke Anuenue – We Are the Colors of the Rainbow.”

Established in 1972 for the youth of Maui County, Na Mele O Maui strives to foster education and enlightenment about Hawaii’s heritage.

Maui County classroom singing groups from kindergarten through 12th grade sang traditional Hawaiian songs, a contest number and one of their choice. The competition judges were Uluwehi Guerrero for musical interpretation, Charles Ka’upu for stage presentation and Kaleikoa Ka’eo for Hawaiian language.

Molokai won the overall song trophy and a six-string koa Kamaka ukulele by Sam Kamaka as the Hawaiian-language winner. Teacher Manuwai Peters prepared the 39 competing students.

Judging the art competition were Maui artists Cheryl McElfresh, Thomas Metcalf and Dale Zarrella. The art contest winners’ works were on display last week in the Hyatt lobby.

SHELL STOCKING

CUC to Babauta: All we need is money

By **AGNES E. DONATO**
REPORTER

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has declined the governor's joint effort proposal to address all of CUC's problems

within four years and instead urged Gov. Juan N. Babauta to discuss how the administration can help the utility firm financially.

"All the corporation needs

is money. Understandably, that remains a most difficult proposition during these times. We ask again, as we have asked before, for the administration's assistance and commitment to discuss funding schemes to help CUC get the money for those which plans already exist," CUC chair Francisco Q. Guerrero told Babauta in a letter.

The governor had asked CUC to develop a CUC restructuring plan, with the help of the administration and the Attorney General's Office. The objective, he had said, is to solve all of the CNMI's utility-related problems within a 48-month period.

Babauta had identified CUC's problems as the collapse of the wastewater collection system,

rising fuel costs, need for rate re-structuring, pending regulatory issues and dangers to the environment, problems with power supply and transmission, and the lack of reliable potable water.

But while the CUC board members agree with Babauta's objectives, they do not approve of the proposal to establish an ad hoc committee or task force, according to Guerrero.

He said CUC is well aware of its problems and has made efforts to address them. He cited CUC's move to commission a study on power rates and a master plan on wastewater services. CUC has also tried to adopt a fuel surcharge regulation, he added.

"In the board's view, a cooperative and concerted commitment to the identification of funding sources is the single most important factor that will determine whether or not CUC can fix the problems before the corporation," Guerrero said.

One example, he said, is the construction of the Agingan wastewater ocean outfall.

CUC has been under U.S. Environmental Protection Agency citation since 2002 because of CUC's failure to complete the project. CUC cannot move ahead with the project due to lack of funding.

Guerrero said many other projects in power generation and wastewater treatment require millions of dollars in funds.

Aside from providing money for such projects, the CNMI government could also help by paying its over \$10 million debt to CUC, Guerrero said. "This receivable is crippling the corporation's ability to operate," he said.

There is pending litigation involving the government's alleged debt to CUC. The government has disputed CUC's billing process and accused the utility firm of overcharging.

"We have no doubt the Legislature and your administration are sympathetic to CUC's situation, even with the current financial situation of the central government. But solutions to CUC's woes require money at every single step," Guerrero reiterated.

Fitial urges governor to support sale of Verizon

House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial lauds Pacific Telecom Inc. for offering new commitments to facilitate its long-sought purchase of Verizon.

In addition to the 27 settlement points PTI has already agreed to honor, Fitial noted that PTI is now offering even more concessions to facilitate the long-delayed transaction.

PTI is offering far more than is actually needed, said the Speaker. It is offering more enticing terms and conditions than even Verizon and MTC have provided over the many years that they have been servicing our islands, Fitial noted.

The Speaker is urging Gov. Juan N. Babauta to support the Verizon sale. He maintains that the governor would be doing a great service to the Commonwealth by supporting this landmark transaction.

Fitial strongly emphasized that if this deal is quickly approved, CNMI consumers would be enjoying more



Fitial

benefits under PTI than they ever enjoyed under Verizon's management.

PTI, he said, is willing to make more commitments—unprecedented commitments—than Verizon was ever willing to provide over many years of service.

Fitial noted that the administration has never asked as much of Verizon as it is currently asking from PTI. He said the transaction should be quickly completed so that PTI can provide the additional services and community commitments that we need.

Roads closed for Troop Fest

Traffic along certain sections of Garapan will be re-routed on Dec. 23 due to the scheduled Troop Fest Concert at the American Memorial Park.

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Section said the following roads within the Garapan Hotel District would be closed and monitored during the Troop Fest Concert:

- Micro Beach Road eastbound lane would be closed. All vehicles heading east on Micro Beach Road by Hyatt Regency Hotel would turn right onto Coral Tree Ave. and proceed south and then left onto Orchid Street onto the main Beach Road by Winchell's.
- All vehicles heading north

along Coral Tree Avenue or east of the Hyatt Regency Hotel would have to make a left turn upon entering the Micro Beach Road and head west to the Micro Beach area for parking.

- The westbound lane along Micro Beach Road from the Garapan Fire Sub-Station is open all the way toward the Micro Beach areas.

The designated parking areas are the Micro Beach Road from the field across from the Park Ranger's Maintenance Office.

This road closure will begin at 2pm, Dec. 23, and will remain closed up until 9pm.

For more information or any questions, contact Sgt. Sylvan M. Rangamar at 664-9084/5.

MIDPAC
+BLUE

Live-fire training on FDM

The U.S. military will be conducting a live-fire training exercise on Farallon De Mendenilla on Dec. 26, Sunday, and Dec. 27, Monday, according to the Emergency Management Office yesterday.

In a statement, EMO advised the public, especially fishermen, commercial pilots, and tour operators, to stay away from the location between 6am Dec. 26 to 12am Dec. 27, and 5am to 10pm on the Dec. 27 due to the danger imposed by the activity.

"The general location of this

activity will be on the island of Farallon De Mendenilla training area from 15,000 feet mean sea level on a 10 nautical mile radius on all quadrants," EMO said. "The cooperation and understanding of the general public is greatly appreciated."

Concerns may be addressed by contacting EMO at 322-9529/9572/8001-3 ext. 23, 24, or 31; VHF marine channel 16, single side band radio on 5.205.0; or at EMO's website at www.cnmiemo.gov.mp.
(Shan Seman)

Island Snapshots

Opinion

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John Pangelinan PUBLISHER
Jayvee L. Vallejera EDITOR

MEMBER

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EDITORIAL

Coral peril

Twenty percent of the world's coral reefs "have been effectively destroyed and show no immediate prospect of recovery." An additional 24 percent "are under imminent risk of collapse through human pressures," and an additional 26 percent "are under a longer term threat of collapse." These are only some of the conclusions of an exhaustive new report by 240 scientists in 98 countries, working under the auspices of the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network. Coral reefs, in addition to being breathtakingly beautiful, are among the cradles of life on Earth—hotbeds of biodiversity critical to sustaining oceanic health. But a combination of global warming, pollution, overfishing, diseases and other factors is ravaging reefs worldwide. While Australian and Pacific reefs remain relatively healthy, the report documents devastating declines elsewhere, including the Caribbean region, where coral cover on many reefs has declined by up to 80 percent. If something isn't done soon, it will be too late for many reefs to recover.

The dire threat to the world's—and America's—oceans is hardly a surprise, and it isn't limited to coral reefs either. Two major task forces have recently documented the grave ecological conditions of America's coastal waters. The studies basically show the same thing: People are using the oceans in a fashion that can't be sustained, and, absent serious change across a range of human behaviors, the oceans will die off. Yet despite the widespread agreement on the nature and severity of the problem, action has been slow.

Along with the related issue of climate change, this is the preeminent environmental issue of our time. President Bush should make it a priority of his second term. An opportunity to begin doing so is coming; the administration by law has to respond by Dec. 20 to the recommendations of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy, which Congress created in 2000 to examine America's policy toward its coastal waters. So far, there is no indication the administration is contemplating the needed dramatic shifts in policy. But the oceans—and their precious corals—cannot afford delay.

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Let's stop sleepwalking through history

By STEWART L. UDALL
SPECIAL TO THE LOS ANGELES TIMES

Scientists tell us that global warming is an omnipresent reality, that in this century it will change the lives of all of us and alter our relationship to the physical world. Only a comprehensive, global strategy will enable humanity to gradually cope with its implications.

Robust, immediate action is needed. Forget wrangling about ratification of the modest Kyoto treaty. Instead, the 20 industrialized countries (let's call them the Power Bloc) that produce most of the world's destructive carbon dioxide emissions must join together to take action.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, stripped of its military trappings, might be a model, and the United States, responsible for 25 percent of those emissions, must lead the way. President Bush has the power and the prestige to convene such an entity and galvanize such an effort. It could be his most important legacy.

For the last two centuries the burning of fossil fuel—coal, natural gas and crude oil—has been propelling human civilization. But fossil resources are finite—they really will run out—and their use has altered Earth's atmosphere. On both fronts, Americans are in denial.

Why are we so blind? We have been conditioned to believe that catastrophe will not occur, that humankind is perpetually on the threshold of discoveries that will magically solve our dilemmas.

As a freshman congressman in 1955, I sat spellbound as physicist John Von Neuman claimed that by 1980 nuclear power plants would produce electricity so cheap it wouldn't have to be metered. Such promises have fostered a belief that the United States will achieve "energy independence" and that science will produce easy panaceas (remember fusion and breeder reactors?). They have even spawned skepticism that the phenomenon called global warming is real.

Organizing an international effort and a NATO-style group to combat real energy and environmental problems would be a big step toward ending our belief in magic. What would such an organization look like?

Each country would bear the expense of sending its best scientists, entrepreneurs, energy specialists, architects and planners to serve on policymaking panels. Each nation could help pay for necessary research and development; logic would suggest that each should ante up based on the carbon dioxide its energy installations produced the previous year.

Fast action must be the goal: establishing priorities, agreeing on what is possible, spreading and inventing strategies that curb fossil

fuel use and increase renewable resource use.

There are four sectors in which dramatic gains could be made. First: electric power use and production. Generating electricity also generates 40 percent of greenhouse gases. A study by the Electric Power Research Institute has concluded that this industry can be fundamentally transformed through serious investment in clean, efficient new means of production and transmission and such simple expedients as sensors that would turn off the lights when people left a room.

The second sector in which change is achievable involves the built environment. Already architects such as Arizona's Edward Mazria are proving that buildings can be operated with "green" efficiency at little extra cost. Using existing renewable energy technologies (solar, thermal, wind and biomass), buildings can be made "carbon-neutral," requiring no fossil-fuel energy to operate. This alone would eliminate nearly half of current global carbon dioxide emissions.

Next come cars and our extravagant automotive transportation system. The Power Bloc must coordinate and agree on ways to encourage—even mandate—the spread of fuel-efficient cars (including hybrids and lighter vehicles) and new fuels.

In the United States, we have finally begun to consider encouraging fuel saving in the way highway systems are designed (allowing hybrids into the carpool lane, for example) or through the carrot and the stick of taxation. We must do more and we must do it in concert with the rest of the world.

Finally, the fourth sector: exploiting renewable energy sources. Money and research are required to perfect new ways of generating and delivering solar, wind and geothermal power. The small actions of individual governments—like Colorado's vote to require its electric companies to generate 10 percent of their power via renewables in the next 10 years—must be multiplied nationally and internationally.

Could Bush bring together representatives from China, Russia, India and the other members in the Power Bloc to address such issues? Could he jump-start a fresh global effort to contain and roll back what his administration calls "climate change"? Of course he could.

But will he? As was the case when President Nixon went to China and President Reagan made overtures to the Soviet Union, when modern U.S. presidents have acted boldly—and often against expectations—they have changed the world. We can only hope that Bush has the same lofty ambition.

Udall represented Arizona in the House from 1954 to 1961 and was secretary of the Interior from 1961 to 1969.

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France in pain

By **ROBERT D. BLACKWILL**
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

After recently spending nearly two weeks in Paris and having many conversations with old friends from France’s national security elite, I conclude that intellectually, most French want the Bush administration to succeed in Iraq. But emotionally, many want it to fail.

Their Cartesian upbringing makes the French understand the consequences for France of an American defeat in Iraq. They know that it would give a profound boost to Islamic terrorism everywhere, including in France. It would destabilize Iraq and could lead to a fracturing of that country—even to civil war. It would introduce another acutely destabilizing element in an already wobbly Middle East region. And it could lead to prolonged U.S. retrenchment as we sought the reasons for our catastrophic failure. In their minds and public statements, the French declare genuinely that Iraq must not fall to Islamic extremism.

But at the same time, these members of the French elite are incensed about U.S. policy toward Iraq and how we got where we are. They are passionately certain that it was a mistake for the United States to force regime change on Iraq, that it has spread international terrorism and made the world more dangerous, and that they told us so before we embarked. They remind us of Charles de Gaulle’s equally ignored advice to John F. Kennedy in 1961 not to become militarily involved in Vietnam. And they remember Suez, the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, the Egypt-Israel

peace treaty and all the other times the United States and France have seen the Middle East so very, very differently.

The French also argue that Iraq is only the latest demonstration of an arrogance of American power that has been growing since the end of the Cold War and has reached new heights during the current administration. They are frustrated because France—and Europe—are too weak and divided to affect U.S. international behavior.

As these throbbing emotions swirl around in the City of Light, our French friends are in agony that the United States should now be rescued and rewarded when they are sure that France is right and the Bush administration is wrong on the most fundamental dimensions of Iraq policy, the Middle East including Israel-Palestine and the global war on terrorism. They think most of the world agrees with them and not with Washington. All this was made clear in President Jacques Chirac’s recent comments during his news conference in London with British Prime Minister Tony Blair.

Nevertheless, France, because of its own vital national interests, must now work to promote a U.S. victory in Iraq. Oh, what pain. If only the French could find a way for Iraq to succeed without the United States succeeding, that would be a perfect outcome. If only the United States could be made to suffer for its excesses regarding Iraq without damaging France. Alas, for the French that seems an impossible—if recurring—dream.

So, on the subject of Iraq, the French are torn between rational analysis, which is so admirable a part of France’s national character, and volcanic feelings generated lower in their anatomies. They are therefore

ready to join, if haltingly, with the United States to bring more stability to Iraq and the Middle East and to simultaneously tell anyone who will listen that U.S. policy in that region is a disaster, that they do not expect it to change in the next four years and that France has been proven right all along. To put it mildly, this cannot be a source of bilateral harmony.

It will take skillful and quiet diplomacy at the highest levels to take the next phase of U.S.-French relations in a positive direction, especially since the venture will be uphill. The substantive differences between the two governments on these issues are huge, and their domestic audiences make the task even harder. All the same, as a strong supporter of the president, of the liberation of Iraq and of robust trans-Atlantic cooperation, I believe the time is ripe for the two nations to make an effort to choreograph a mutual ascent.

Bad ties between the United States and France complicate America’s Middle East diplomacy and cause problems for our friends in Europe. Unlike some of our allies, France does not have a post-modernist army; theirs fights. For those ready to give up on reaching some accommodation with the French regarding Iraq and the Middle East, I say, not yet. With the president going to Europe early next year, let’s try with the French as Count Basie use to intone regarding “April in Paris,” one more once.

The writer was President Bush’s deputy national security adviser for strategic planning and also served as presidential envoy to Iraq. He is now president of Barbour Griffith & Rogers International, a lobbying firm.

Letters to the Editor

‘The case of the (Mafnas) spoken record’

Point 1: You have stated that the Governor and the Legislature have no voice in the disposition or use of indigenous public lands. Are these people NOT indigenous Chamorro people with the same rights to put forth their opinions as others? And further, do they not hold a responsibility to represent the people of the CNMI AND to further the just will of the majority of those people?

Point 2: You stated that Azmar’s Don Farrell implied that the MPLA board members were “irresponsible and derelict,” yet in Mr. Farrell’s recent letter he noted Azmar’s “respect” for each one of them and has never cast any aspersion at MPLA or the board. Are the words “irresponsible” and “derelict” the latest in a long line of your word substitutions?

Point 3: You have stated that any of the MPLA board members would have been “a complete moron or severely corrupted” to have granted ANY type of permit. Is it your position that should a decision not be to your liking the board would be composed of “morons” and “severely corrupted”? I believe you owe the MPLA board an apology for that one!

Point 4: You refer to your “interests that are being betrayed or compromised.” Exactly what interests are you referring to, sir, and how are they being betrayed? Do you not want to see Pagan developed and a new revenue source developed as well as more local employment for ALL the people of the CNMI?

Point 5: Now you have gone too far. You state that “we” (who

is we?) discern that your critics would use matrimonial ties for personal gain and enrichment at the expense of YOUR children. This is the vilest of insults. You assert that those of non-indigenous extraction would marry into the indigenous population solely to “use” that population for personal gains and enrichment! That not only insults every non-indigenous person in the CNMI but also insults the indigenous population as it implies that Chamorro spouses would allow themselves to be used for such and are traitors to your purist and racist attitudes.

Your slippery slide down the slope of arrogance, racism and self-indulgence is complete. Your constant casting about of personal aspersions has rendered your rhetoric as meaningless as that of an immature, insecure, tantrum-throwing child hell-bent to have his way while holding everyone else hostage to your whining.

Personally, I know that my Chamorro wife HAS enriched my life, but in that most precious of manners: the blending of yet another wonderful culture into my own and our children are proud of their rich heritage!

You owe everyone in the CNMI a public apology for this most egregious of behavior!

Dr. Thomas D. Arkle Jr.
San Jose, Tinian

What it means to be American

This morning my children and I listened to Harry Blalock read an article expressing a view of what it means to be an American and a patriot. If you heard it, you know that he thinks it means to qualify you have to be a Christian, English speaker and not like things like multi-culturalism. It was a very strict definition that my children and I decided we did not agree with.

To me being a patriotic American means being someone who cherishes the ideals and principles that have made America great. Those ideals and principles have been strengthened through the different waves of immigrants who have become American. We are great because we are African and Italian and German, Filipino and Chinese and Pacific Islander. We are Muslim and Hindu and Jewish and Christian and everything else.

We are a great country because it doesn’t matter what country your parents came from, as long as they had the dream to be part of a society that protects the weak with laws like the Fair Labor Standards Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. It doesn’t matter what religion or color you are if you cherish freedom of speech for those with unpopular ideas.

Some people think that September 11 means that we should narrow our eyes and pull in and cut the freedoms that they were

afraid of in the first place. They think it means we narrow our definition of what America is and invite those who don’t share the view to get the heck out.

For me and a lot of other Americans of every color and religion, September 11 showed what a beautiful country we have all built together with our different languages and different cultures coming together to celebrate a nation of freedom and justice for all. September 11 made freedom-loving Americans realize that, to keep America great, we need all of us to work together, to speak out against injustice and intolerance and not let anyone narrow our definition of what is patriotic or American.

What my children and I heard Mr. Blalock describe on the radio this morning was not the America my immigrant ancestors traveled to generations ago in search of a better life. Let’s remember that, in great part, it’s our differences that make America great.

Above all, we have to strive not to become like the intolerant fundamentalists who attacked us.

Vicki King Taitano
Capitol Hill

‘Oil for food’ worked

By **JAMES DOBBINS**
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

American outrage over the diversion of U.N.-supervised Iraqi oil-for-food money seems to miss three salient points. First, no American funds were stolen. Second, no U.N. funds were stolen. Third, the oil-for-food program achieved its two objectives: providing food to the Iraqi people and preventing Saddam Hussein from rebuilding his military threat to the region—and in particular from reconstituting his programs for weapons of mass destruction.

The oil-for-food program was part of a comprehensive set of U.N.-mandated sanctions designed to prevent Saddam from again becoming a threat to his neighbors. The program was intended to allow the proceeds from Iraqi oil exports to be used to purchase food and medicine for the Iraqi people, but not weapons or WMD-related technology for the Saddam regime.

It is now clear, based on the most exhaustive American post-intervention examination, that the U.N. sanctions regime, including both U.N. weapons inspectors and the U.N.-administered oil-for-food program, fully met this core objective. At the direction of the Security Council, and as a result of the international embargo and international inspections, Iraq destroyed its stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction in the early 1990s, did not acquire new such weapons and did not even reconstitute a program to develop nuclear weapons. More broadly, U.N. sanctions resulted in a steady decline in Iraq’s military capabilities from the end of the Persian Gulf War in 1991 to the day of the American-led intervention.

At the same time, the oil-for-food program served its humanitarian goal of feeding the Iraqi people, if not perfectly at least so effectively that Washington asked the United Nations to keep the program in effect for six months after the United States took power in Baghdad.

It is clear that Saddam and his henchmen took advantage of inadequate U.N. oversight to siphon large sums from the program, but the money was Iraqi to begin with and the amounts siphoned were never enough to undermine the purpose for which the sanctions were in place. It is also clear that unscrupulous non-Iraqi businessmen sometimes, apparently, with the knowledge of their governments, connived in these diversions and drew illegitimate profits from them.

Thus the bad news is that the United Nations proved unequal to the task of preventing a rogue regime from stealing some of its own money. The good news is that this same U.N. machinery proved equal to the task of preventing that regime from fielding weapons of mass destruction, developing nuclear weapons and re-emerging as a military threat to its neighbors. So the U.N. performance was mixed, but at least it got its priorities straight.

See **OIL** on Page 12

MIXED

From Page 1

the potential impact of the World Trade Organization's lifting of quota restrictions on apparel, the CNMI's multi-million-dollar industry.

For Sagana, however, Christmas spending must go on. "We can't reason out our difficulties for our godchildren. Christmas is for children."

The series of fuel price increases this year have impacted on prices of consumer products. Aware of the situation, 40-year-old Kagman resident Lily said she started saving a couple of bucks even before the holidays so as not to spoil her Christmas spending.

"I usually spend for clothes for the kids and not just for toys," Lily said. "We need to save for Christmas."

Lily's savings allowed her to allot over \$1,000 for her holidays shopping, about \$700 more than the amount she spent last year.

Lower prices

To attract shoppers, different stores on Saipan have offered their products at substantial discounted prices.

Payless Shoe Source have placed a giant sign that bears the catchphrase "up to 70% off" in front of its recently opened San Jose branch.

The sign attracted Janice Schulmeyer, who resides in nearby Chalan Kiya, to check out the store and spend a few bucks for a new pair of shoes. Some items, which used to be sold at over \$30, carried tags that peg their new

prices at less than \$10.

Papaya, a ladies' boutique located right at the heart of the Garapan tourist district, has special orange price tags on apparel, which are being offered at discounted rates. Shoppers swarmed the store Saturday for clothes that were selling for about \$10, less than the regular price of more than \$20.

Bigger stores have slated promotional activities, which they advertise in dailies to attract shoppers. Town House department store offers up to 40 percent discount on prices of retail items in its "Customer Appreciation Sale" that runs from Dec. 17 to 24. The promotion includes 40- and 30-percent discount on prices of all shoe and clothing items.

Townhouse general manager Mike Lamoreux said the promotions were intended to stimulate consumer spending, after a modest sales turnout during the Thanksgiving holidays.

Lamoreux said that, while fuel price increases generally affected the prices of retail items due to increased shipping costs, the store had to reduce its profit margin from these items. He bared plans of conducting an "after-Christmas clearance sale."

"That's basically the lifeblood of the business—to attract people to your store," Lamoreux said.

Joeten Shopping Center offers 15- to 50-percent discount on retail items. Besides popularizing the "Early Bird Sale" when the store offers discounted prices for morning shoppers, Joeten conducted last Saturday the "One Day Super Sale," wherein substantial price

\$3,682 valuation.

Even if that is true, Brown argued that the amount of \$3.45 million does not conform to valuation provisions of the law. Her lawyer, Sachs, explained that valuation of condemned land should be determined at the time of the taking of the property by the Commonwealth government.

Sachs said the lawyer of the estate's administrator, Antonio Atalig, presented an appraisal report that used Aug. 30, 1991 as the time of the land taking, which actually occurred sometime in 1968. The appraisal pegged the market value of the property at \$500 per square meter.

Despite the recommendation of MPLA attorney Alan Lane to have the appraisal report further investigated, MPLA board chair Demapan-Castro allegedly urged the board to expedite the approval of the Malite estate's land compensation claim on Aug. 13, 2004. The board acted favorably on this. The Malite estate was represented by Atalig, brother of MPLA board member Benita Atalig-Manglona.

MPLA's acting commissioner then proceeded to make a requisition for the land compensation claim, asking the CDA to release the money. The CDA had initially held off from releasing the money when the AGO objected but the agency reportedly consented later to the fund's release.

Sachs also said there are conflicts of interest between the Malite heirs' lawyers and some MPLA board members, which taint the transaction. He said MPLA legal counsel Raymond Quichocho shares an office with Atalig's brother Pedro, whose office manager, Juan Demapan, is brother of the MPLA chair.

The lawsuit sparked the filing of a separate action by former Senate President Juan S. Demapan, who asked the court to declare that Brown is holding the position of attorney general unlaw-

discounts were offered all-day long.

"Everybody likes to save money," said Joeten general manager Mike Troupe, adding that Joeten would run promotions until Christmas.

High sales turnout

Troupe said Joeten's sales appear to improve compared with those of last year's holidays.

"Last year, it's good. This year, it's better," Troupe said. "The economy seems to be gradually improving. They're [shoppers] more confident than the last couple of years."

Although rising fuel costs resulted in higher prices for select retail merchandise, Troupe said Joeten managed to attract customers by pegging prices at minimal profit margin levels.

"We attract customers by bringing the right product all the time, [including] the right clothing, [and by having] good display and a clean store," he added.

He also said the number of tourist shoppers increased this year, adding to the local populace that patronize Joeten.

Troupe said Joeten's Early Bird Sale last Dec. 11 easily became the company's "best sales day of the year."

Townhouse's sales have also been improving compared with the same period last year, according to Lamoreux.

"It's better than last year," Lamoreux said. "They're [shoppers] are spending more."

He said shoppers these days could buy more merchandise due to substantial discounts on price tags, reducing profit margin on retail items.

fully. In that case, Malite estate attorney Pedro Atalig, a former Supreme Court justice, represents Demapan.

Atalig argued that Brown has no authority to bring the Malite estate's claim to court, questioning the validity of her confirmation as attorney general. He said the Trust Territory government, through a 1978 court order that awarded only some \$3,682 to the Malite estate for the condemnation of a 6,900-sqm land, treated the Malite heirs "like animals."

Atalig also said that, in preventing the release of the \$3.45 million compensation to the Malite heirs, the CNMI government continues the unfair treatment accorded the heirs by the TT government.

He said Brown caused the filing of the suit despite the instruction of the governor to release the money to the Malite estate, noting that the passage of several pieces of legislation—Public Laws 13-17, 13-25, and 13-37—had the intent to compensate persons affected by the Trust Territory government's taking of private property based on eminent domain.

"The statutes were created to bring a close to these outstanding land disputes between the government and private persons victimized by the government's taking of their private lands without just compensation," Atalig said.

VETERAN

From Page 3

fly from the Guam Veterans Affairs office to conduct a full military funeral for Klase. The relatives of Klase will not be able to attend the service due to old age.

Manglona promised to take photos of the service and will send them through e-mail to Klase's family in Oregon, who are very grateful for Manglona's generosity.

LUCKY

From Page 1

The couple, who requested anonymity, said they were on their way to a family member's house on Friday when they heard on the radio the winning combination that made them \$100,000 richer.

"Did you hear the same number as I did?" the wife asked, her heart pounding in excitement and tension. Her husband was behind the wheels as she popped up the volume of the car stereo to hear the lottery draw over Power 99 FM. She thought that she heard the numbers right—1-9-15-18-30—but her ears might have been playing tricks on her.

Her husband, who was also in shock, nodded as he fumbled with the steering wheel. The couple has just become \$100,000 richer. The wife was screaming inside the car.

The lucky number combination was manually picked by the wife based on the birthdays of her husband and his siblings. She only spent \$15 dollars that Friday. She doesn't normally play during Fridays but that day, she insisted with her husband and pulled over at the Shell Gualo Rai station to buy tickets.

While listening to the draw, she already got three of her numbers drawn. "As long as I win four numbers it will be a nice Christmas. When they announced the last number I was in shock," she said. "I thought I was going to have a heart attack!"

That night, the couple couldn't sleep and eat. "It was like a long weekend for us," she said.

The next day she said she called the Marianas Lottery office to verify the drawn numbers and was told she got the winning ticket. She usually just places her tickets inside the car but for the winning ticket she guarded it with her life. "Every time I would open my purse, I would always look for the ticket if it's still there," she recalled, "I thought it might run away or the numbers might change!"

That same day, her husband went to Marianas Lottery office and saw Coleman, the company's general manager, on the road. The manager thought somebody was trying to run her off the road. But he managed to stop the manager's car and informed her about their winning ticket.

TOTTOTVILLE

From Page 1

Telesource Saipan.

In a Dec. 16, 2004, letter to NMHC and Commonwealth Development Authority executive director Maria Lourdes S. Ada, SSFM International-Saipan vice president Ralph Hayashi said that, based on interviews with homeowners, they have learned that "no one from NMHC visited the homes to review the complaints."

"One homeowner told that she was instructed by NMHC personnel to go see SSFM, even though she told the NMHC person that she should not have do so (sic)," said Hayashi.

He further said that one hom-

GES

From Page 5

lion for all projects combined.

Borja disclosed that additional classrooms are currently in their design phase before construction at both Kagman high and elementary schools.

The two finally got their hands on the dough during the check presentation ceremony held yesterday at the Marianas Lottery office. The lucky couple presented the winning ticket to Marianas Lottery general manager Marie Coleman and Hironori Izumi of auditing firm Ernst & Young. The winning ticket was verified and matched against the yellow ribbon copy of the winning ticket. Izumi certified the winning ticket.

The 31 percent withholding tax brought down the couple's winnings to \$69,000. The wife said she already expected this and was not disappointed.

The wife said she has been playing since the lottery started. She already spent more than a \$100 playing the lottery. Every time she checked, it seemed that nobody was lucky enough to take home the jackpot prize. "I guess nobody's winning it because I'm going to win it," she laughed.

Though they intend to keep quiet about it, these parents of three are very excited to make their children's Christmas more memorable.

The two are just average government employees. Paying debts has always been a nightmare for them.

The couple feels that a weight has been lifted off their shoulders. "Less stress now," the wife affirmed, "Now we can enjoy going to work everyday."

Coleman herself said that when her office learned that there was a winner for the jackpot prize, they were shocked but excited. "I'm just so happy for the winner," she said. "My understanding is that they were a long time lottery customer, they never gave up. Someone needed the money, so we are very, very happy that somebody finally won it."

The \$100,000 winning jackpot prize had been at stake for four months now. The lottery has had several Bonus Ball winners and 2nd and 3rd prizes are normally won every week.

Marianas Lottery has been operating in the CNMI for almost two years now and no one had ever won any of the jackpot prizes until now. Currently, the office has already paid out over half a million in cash prizes.

Others present during the awarding ceremony were Finance Department representative Connie Salas, Revenue and Tax director Esther Ada, and staff members of Marianas Lottery.

owner indicated that there appears to be "favoritism being extended by your staff."

"The homeowner indicated NMHC will do some things for some homeowners and not for others," he said.

Hayashi said that most of the items cited by homeowners were reported perhaps as far back as two or three years ago.

As far as SSFM is concerned, he said, it has provided recommendations on the reported deficiencies and has communicated with NMHC on the issue.

"We urge you to take care of these matters by either the original contractor or NMHC," said Hayashi.

Ada was reached for comments but was not available as of press time.

"The projects fit the available funds being identified for us and request for assistance is being met by elected leaders," he said.

He said there is need for expansion at the Kagman schools due to the projected increase in enrollment in the future.

Business

Gas costs slump, crude supply up

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—An increase in crude oil supply has contributed to another drop in gas prices in the past two weeks, continuing a downward trend that began two months ago, an industry analyst said Sunday.

Between Dec. 3 and Dec. 17, the combined national price for all grades of gasoline dropped more than 10 cents per gallon to \$1.86, bringing the total decrease since Oct. 22 to more than 21 cents per gallon, said analyst Trilby Lundberg, who publishes the semimonthly Lundberg Survey of 7,000 gas stations across the country.

As of Dec. 17, the average price at the pump for self-serve regular gasoline was \$1.83, with mid-grade at \$1.93 and premium at \$2.02, she said.

Lundberg said a drop in seasonal demand, as well as a drop in crude oil prices from \$55 a barrel to about \$45 a barrel, helped ease pump prices just before the holidays. But prices are still “nearly 35 cents per gallon above what they were just before Christmas 2003,” when the average price for self-serve regular was \$1.48, Lundberg said.

The lowest average price for regular on Dec. 17 was in Tulsa, Okla., at \$1.56 per gallon; the highest was in Honolulu, at \$2.32.

Self-serve diesel prices also fell more than 9 cents nationwide, to \$2.11 per gallon—nearly 48 cents more than a year ago, Lundberg said.

CORPORATE BRIEFS

India eBay arrest sparks anger, concern

NEW DELHI (AP)—Officials in India’s technology industry expressed anger and concern over the jailing of the CEO of eBay’s Indian subsidiary related to the online sale of a sex video. The U.S. State Department has also made inquiries about the case.

“The U.S. Embassy is following this case very closely. There is high level interest in Washington regarding the case,” an embassy statement, issued over the weekend, said of the arrest of Avnish Bajaj, the CEO of Baazee.com—India’s most popular shopping portal owned by San Jose, Calif.-based eBay Inc.

Bajaj, an Indian-born U.S. citizen, was arrested Friday related to the sale of pornographic images showing teenage classmates at a prominent New Delhi high school engaged in a sex act. Police said eight video compact discs depicting the acts were auctioned through Baazee.com in late November.

Obscure Russian company buys Yukos unit

MOSCOW (AP)—An unknown group made the only bid Sunday for the main production unit of Russia’s largest oil producer, Yukos, agreeing to pay \$9.3 billion and gaining control of one of Russia’s most prized assets for half of what foreign auditors say it was worth.

The sale of Yuganskneftegaz reduces the once-giant Yukos to a shadow of its former self, one of the heaviest blows to a company which has been the target of a persistent government campaign. The government says it only

wants to collect \$28 billion in back taxes. Yukos officials say the Kremlin—President Vladimir Putin in particular—is punishing the company for the politics of its now-jailed founder.

It was not known from where or if the buyer, BaikalFinansGroup, had accumulated the financing for the deal, and several analysts suggested the previously unknown company might be nothing more than a quickly formed front for Gazprom, the Russian state natural gas conglomerate that was the expected high bidder. Gazprom denied any links.

Few brokerages making predictions for 2005

NEW YORK (AP)—Brokerage earnings so far this quarter have been positive, but few Wall Street firms are making big predictions for the year ahead, leaving investors to wonder just how well the markets will do.

Earnings at the big Wall Street firms are inexorably tied to the performance of the market. During the summer and early autumn, when stocks fell and trading volumes were light, quarterly earnings were mediocre at best. In the fourth quarter, which ended in November for most brokerages, Wall Street saw a nice pickup in both stock prices and volume.

That was reflected last week in earnings from Lehman Brothers Holding Inc. and Goldman Sachs Group Inc., though Goldman’s stock fell due to higher expenses related to litigation and a new Chinese joint venture. When Bear Stearns Cos. Inc. and Morgan Stanley report earnings in the week ahead, their numbers will likely reflect a similar boost.

Retailers see little late holiday buying

NEW YORK (AP)—The nation’s retailers remained on edge, as the much-hoped for sales bonanza appeared not to materialize on the last weekend before Christmas, despite an abundance of deals on toys and apparel.

Merchants needed a hefty sales surge this past weekend to recoup lost business after seeing a slow start to a holiday selling season that never gathered steam. Now, they’ll have to rely even more heavily on the final days before and after Christmas to meet their holiday sales forecast.

“We are not getting the kind of lift we need. Traffic and sales were below expectations” on Saturday, said Michael P. Niemira, chief economist at the International Council of Shopping Centers, who was analyzing data late Sunday from ShopperTrak, which tallies sales results from 30,000 retail outlets. Niemira, who serves as an adviser to ShopperTrak, said sales figures will be released Monday.

He noted that luxury stores—which have enjoyed robust sales as their well-heeled customers have ben-

efited from the economy’s recovery—had the best performance. Stores like Sears, Roebuck and Co. that catered to the mid- to-low income shoppers—who have pulled back on spending as they have been more vulnerable to higher heating costs and a volatile job market—attracted big crowds with deep discounts and expanded shopping hours.

Marshal Cohen, senior industry analyst at NPD Group Inc., a market research company based in Port Washington, N.Y., agreed that the weekend was disappointing: “Some stores

did moderately well, some did moderately OK.”

What is hurting merchants is that there is no must-have item, except in consumer electronics—iPod music players and the PlayStation2 video game console, for example, have become difficult to find in many areas.

The Saturday before Christmas is traditionally the busiest day of the year for merchants, though last year, the day after Thanksgiving stole that crown. However, the last weekend before Christmas could be losing its luster as there are more ways to shop for a holiday item.

baby news

Asia

World



tribune graduation ad

Overdrive

joeten motors
+2 color

Life & Style

Listen to children's questions

Or the version of 'Night Before Christmas' you don't want your kids to hear

By VALRICK WELCH
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

One of the joys of teaching is listening to the questions students ask. In one of my class discussions, I mentioned getting in touch with the Captain of the submarine I served on. It triggered a lot of questions. "How big is a submarine?" "How wide is a submarine?" One that really got a lot of "yeas" was, "How do you go to the bathroom in a submarine?"

The lesson we were discussing was not about submarines so I told the class that we needed to get back to our assigned work, but that I would try to explain at another time the submarine sewage system. I do vividly recall an incident on "going to the bathroom in my submarine." It may be worth the telling for the sailors who might be on R & R on island this holiday season, or any adult with a raunchy sense of humor. Our submarine crew even had a poem to commemorate the event. I e-mailed a friend for the words to the poem and he quickly sent a reply in seamen's language: "You mean the one about chief dumb-ass?" This should indicate to the unwary that the telling entails toilet humor and may prove a little raw for the tender of ears. This may be the point where the queasy of stomach, and delicate of taste may stop reading!

My friend's words are accurate. The chief mentioned was a foolish corpsman. Submarine corpsmen are expected to be the best in the Navy because they work alone and must be prepared for any medical emergency, but this guy was a little short on common sense.

Toilets on submarines drain to a big tank. When the tank is full it is pressurized at a rate greater than the outside sea pressure. The sewage will thus blow out to the ocean rather than the ocean flowing into the tank. However, if the toilet is flushed when the tank is pressurized, the sewage will spray out of the toilet. Now, about the chief corpsman. He went to the bathroom while the tank was pressurized. Told by a seaman to wait until the tank was depressurized, the corpsman replied that he wasn't going to flush. With an air of authority and a tad touch of arrogance, the corpsman entered one of the stalls. A few minutes later a jet roar spread a killer smell. Our seaman recalled that in the middle of a dark misty cloud stood our chief corpsman with brown stuff dripping from his face and glasses.

The poor seaman who was operating the tank pressurization system tried not to laugh, but it was killing him. When other sailors realized what happened, they could not control a cacophony of laughter. For Christmas, the crew made a skit of this incident of the seaman and the corpsman to the format of "The Night Before Christmas." It read:

"Listen, Oh Sailors, and you shall hear,
of the night we blew the sans with fear;
It was half past one and all around
the crew was asleep and there wasn't a sound;
The lineup was checked with utmost care,



*Little did we know "The Flapper" was there;
(the valve in the toilet is called a flapper valve,
after the incident the corpsman became known as
"chief flapper.")*

*All was well, the pressure was high.
I thought I saw feet from the corner of my eye;
Before I could act or turn around
out from the shitter there came a terrible
sound;*

*The vapor was blowing and crap was flying,
for trapped in a stall, a chief was crying;
I spun on my heels and stopped the flow,
for I thought it was time to emergency blow;
The tank was vented and empty of shit,
I still wasn't sure the cause of it;
When out of the smoke staggered a shape,
covered in crap as brown as an ape;
"Secure the blow," he seemed to say,
but the sans were empty anyway.
Just about then he started to think,
Someone will have to clean up this stink;
He looked in my face, I started to quail,
I know he had thought of a wonderful tale;*

*"It's the "A" Gang's valve that rolled open, I
think
With a guy like that blowing, it's lucky we don't
sink";*

*I opened my mouth, I wanted to fight,
for I knew I was in for a very long night.
The moral of our story for all of the crew is:
We clean our own messes, except for a few!"*

(Submarine sailors can accept a person making a mistake, but the corpsman turned the crew against him when he blamed the accident on the A-gang, the auxiliary crew, and then refused to help clean up the mess)

Blowing the sanitary tank on himself is the act the chief will be most remembered for, but I remember other, more foolish things he did.

Every time we pulled into port, the corpsman was required to give the crew a lecture on safe sex. He would show pictures of sick people with STDs, go over correct use of a condom, and explain the dangers of using folk remedies that did not work.

Our corpsman made sure that condoms were placed at the exit hatches for the sailors to take. Comments from returning sailors indicated that the condoms were not stopping any STDs. Here are a few comments I remember: "The girl didn't want me to wear it." Yea! "I was too drunk to even find my pants." For sure. "I only took three, and no way was I going to reuse one." Uh-huh! "I was so wasted, I didn't even think about it." Really.

Of course, the corpsman's trust on the efficacy of condoms is indicated by the fact that he took antibiotics before he left the sub. He also passed them out to his buddies, which was a great way to make sure the bugs become drug resistant. The corpsman failed to mention to the sailors that they could enjoy themselves without paid sex. He didn't mention abstinence as an option, nor remind most of the crew that being married entailed some consideration on how they treated their spouses. He didn't mention that the feelings of guilt might be worse than what momentary pleasure was worth. In short, each of his lectures simply assumed that because we were sailors, we were going to participate in reckless, irresponsible and downright immoral activities.

For this holiday season, along with safety messages like "Don't drink and drive," sailors need to remember not to flush a toilet on a submarine when the tank is pressurized, and definitely not to trust one's physical and mental health to a condom. And to all adults, to listen to the questions children ask. They may just bring more joy than the Christmas presents.

Valrick Welch is an elementary school teacher on Saipan.

'Lemony Snicket' tops box office in debut

LOS ANGELES (AP)—"Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events" brought in \$30.2 million of good fortune to debut in first place at the weekend box office.

The film based on the first three children's books by Lemony Snicket, who is actually author Daniel Handler, knocked the star-driven sequel "Ocean's Twelve" to second place, according to studio estimates released Sunday.

"Spanglish," a new Sony film starring Tea Leoni, Adam Sandler and Spanish actress Paz Vega, made its debut at third with an estimated weekend haul of \$9 million.

Final figures were to be released Monday.

"Lemony Snicket" tells the

story of a trio of orphans who try to defend themselves from greedy Count Olaf, played by Jim Carrey, who pursues the children by concealing himself as a variety of thinly veiled characters.

Playing in wide release at 3,620 theaters, "Lemony Snicket" averaged \$8,343 a cinema.

"Jim Carrey and the books are really the primary driving forces behind it and the marketing seems to have worked very well," said Wayne Lewellen, president of distribution for Paramount.

"The Aviator," starring Leonardo DiCaprio as eccentric billionaire Howard Hughes, opened in 40 theaters in New York, Los Angeles and "resort towns"—near ski resorts and in Hawaii and Palm Springs—in



In this photo provided by Paramount Pictures and DreamWorks Pictures, (Left to right) Jim Carrey as Count Olaf, Liam Aiken as Klaus, Kara/Shelby Hoffman as Sunny and Emily Browning as Violet in "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events."

an attempt to catch vacationing Academy Awards voters, said Mike Rudnitsky, head of domestic distribution at Miramax.

The film earned \$831,124 with a per screen average of \$20,778.

"The Aviator," which also features Cate Blanchett as Hughes' legendary love Katharine Hepburn, will expand to about 1,750 screens on Christmas Day.

Other films in limited release that have been receiving Oscar buzz include Bill Murray's quirky oceanography tale "The Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou," and "Million Dollar Baby," with Hilary Swank portraying a woman who tries to improve her life of hard knocks by training as a boxer.

In its second week, "Life Aquatic" played on two screens

in New York and Los Angeles and brought in \$100,595, a drop of only 11 percent from its debut weekend. "Million Dollar Baby" has brought in \$233,230 since its opening Wednesday with a per screen average of \$29,153.

"It just seems the family market is insatiable in their need for new entertainment options," Dergarabedian said.

"The Polar Express," in particular, has continued to draw in family audiences, earning \$8.6 million to bring its cumulative total over six weeks to \$123.6 million. "Polar Express" saw only an 11 percent drop in its audience from the week before, while other top films had steeper falls, including "Ocean's Twelve," which lost 53 percent, and "Blade: Trinity," which lost 59 percent and dropped from second to fifth.

Revenues from the top 12 movies were down 25 percent compared to last year, but the numbers were skewed because "Lord of the Rings: Return of the King" made \$72.6 million during its 2003 debut, Dergarabedian said.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at North American theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.

1. "Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events," \$30.2 million
2. "Ocean's Twelve," \$18.3 million.
3. "Spanglish," \$9 million
4. "The Polar Express," \$8.6 million.
5. "Blade: Trinity," \$6.6 million.
6. "National Treasure," \$6.1 million.
7. "Christmas With the Kranks," \$5.7 million.
8. "The Flight of the Phoenix," \$5.1 million.
9. "Closer," \$3.5 million.
10. "The Incredibles," \$3.3 million.

The success of "Lemony Snickets" continues a trend that has seen family oriented films scoring well at the box office, said Paul Dergarabedian, president of box-office tracker Exhibitor Relations.

MTV reaches global milestone

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Dreams of world domination must be hard for MTV executives to avoid when they host a party at the Kremlin, with a Russian diva and Queen dueting on "We Will Rock You" and Russian soldiers performing a hip-hop dance routine.

MTV Networks will reach a milestone in February when the turn of a switch starts an MTV outlet in Africa, the company's 100th channel worldwide and first based on that continent.

Most of its American audience is probably unaware of the extent to which MTV and its sister networks have blanketed the world in an aggressive expansion drive. That may soon change.

Much of it is the work of Bill Roedy, who joined MTV shortly after its first international network, MTV Europe,

opened in Amsterdam in 1987. As he greets a recent visitor to his office, he's a little glum; he just got a call telling him Russian President Vladimir Putin had to put off their meeting for a few weeks.

"It seems easy now," Roedy said. "Back then it was not as easy. I don't think anyone imagined it would be like it is now."

Of the 100 worldwide networks, 43 are some variation of MTV—like Africa's new network MTV Base, which is an offshoot of a European channel focusing on urban music. Twenty-three are Nickelodeon offshoots, 15 are VH1s and the rest includes a number of local networks that MTV's parent company Viacom has acquired.

MTV estimates that at least one of their networks is available in one-third of the world's homes with televisions. About 80 percent of its viewership now is outside of the United States.

HBO, Discovery, ESPN and CNN have all been active internationally, but none have built worldwide distribution to the extent of MTV, said Larry Gerbrandt, a television analyst for AlixPartners LLC.

The logic is simple: the United States is a "mature" market now with limited expansion possibilities, he said.

"The long-term future is international," he said. "So from a strategic viewpoint, it's where MTV and Nickelodeon can reap the most rewards."

That's why there's a Nickelodeon in Nepal, and a Nickelodeon Nordic dubbed in Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. Launched last year, MTV Guangdong is available to 77 million homes in China and Hong Kong. MTV Indonesia includes a regular call to prayer for its Islamic audience. MTV Australia films a version of "Total Request Live" from a boat in Sydney Harbor.

Famed Soprano Renata Tebaldi dies at 82

ROME (AP)—Renata Tebaldi, an Italian soprano renowned for her angelic voice, her stardom at New York's Metropolitan and Italy's La Scala and her media-fueled rivalry with Maria Callas, died Sunday at age 82.

The opera singer died at her home in San Marino, a tiny, independent republic in north-central Italy, after a long illness, said her doctor, Dr. Niksa Simetovic.

Tebaldi was considered to have one of the most beautiful Italian voices of the 20th century, relying on rich, perfectly produced tones. The late conductor Arturo Toscanini once said she had "the voice of an angel."

"Farewell, Renata, your memory and your voice will be etched on my heart forever," tenor Luciano Pavarotti said Sunday, quoted by the ANSA news agency.

La Scala music director Riccardo Muti praised Tebaldi as "one of the greatest performers with one of the most extraordinary voices in the field of opera." At Venice's La Fenice theater, the audience observed a minute of silence in her memory.

Tebaldi, who was at her peak in the 1950s, was recalled for her renditions of Puccini and Verdi with a voice praised for its purity of timbre and exceptional range of color and shadings.

For years, opera fans devoured details of what they perceived as a prima donna duel between Tebaldi and Callas, and La Scala devotees were divided into two camps much as Milan's soccer fans are hotly split over the city's two soccer teams.

But much of the supposed rivalry with the Greek-American diva was actually whipped up by the media. After her retirement, Tebaldi told an interviewer she had never considered fiery Callas a rival.

Tebaldi was born on Feb. 1, 1922, in Pesaro, the Adriatic resort that is the birthplace of composer Gioacchino Rossini and the host of summer music concerts. After recovering from polio, contracted when she was 3, she studied at that town's conservatory and at the conservatory of Parma.

Tebaldi made her debut in 1944 as Elena in Boito's "Mefistofele" in the northern Italian town of Rovigo. Soon after, she began performing in some of the world's most noted opera houses and sang in a concert of arias conducted by Toscanini at the 1946 reopening of Milan's La Scala, which had been damaged by World War II bombs.



Tebaldi

WALLACE

Hayek, Cruz hit it off on 'Bandidas' set

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Spanish film star Penelope Cruz and Mexican actress Salma Hayek say they hit it off from day one during the filming of "Bandidas," a Western about two female outlaws set in 19th Century Mexico.

"We've enjoyed it from the first day until yesterday," said Cruz about 14 weeks of working with Hayek, mostly in the northern Mexican state of Durango. "Now she's a one of the best companions I've ever encountered or ever will. We have an incredible communication."

Written and produced by French filmmaker Luc Besson, "Bandidas" tells the story of two women—one rich, the other poor—who overcome their differences to work together—robbing banks. Same Shepard and Dwight Yoakam also have roles in the movie, which finishes shooting this week and does not yet have a release date.

Besson testified to the close relationship between the two starring actresses, noting that the friendship verged upon the conspiratorial.



Actress Penelope Cruz, left, and Salma Hayek poses for photographers during a press conference to promote the movie "Bandidas", Mexico City, Saturday, Dec. 18, 2004.

"I just want to tell you it's 100 percent true," said Besson, who recently produced the U.S. action film "Taxi," a remake of the 1998 French film he wrote. "They love each other, sometimes too much. They speak

Spanish. We don't understand anything."

Hayek, who was born in Coatzacoalcas in the Gulf coast state of Veracruz, said her role as a Robin Hood-style bandit came easy after a piece of ad-

vice from Besson.

"The first thing he told us was, it's very important that these women be heroes, but never stop being women, that they not be women trying to be men," Hayek said.

Kids treated to day at Jackson's estate

LOS OLIVOS, Calif. (AP)—Christmas came early for some 200 children who got to play at Michael Jackson's amusement park and meet Santa Claus. "I hope you have a wonderful day. Merry Christmas. I love you," the pop singer called out to the children Friday from the driveway of his estate.

Jackson, who faces trial next year on child molestation charges, appeared happy during the few minutes he spoke to the arriving throng.

One of the youngsters shouted, "We love you!"

"I love you more," Jackson replied before putting an umbrella over his head and walking back toward his house.

Jackson spokeswoman Raymone K. Bain said the entertainer chose to make an unusual personal appearance as a surprise for the last group of children touring Neverland before the Christmas holidays.

Bain said there was no relationship between the event and Jackson's upcoming trial.

Santa Barbara County authorities have charged Jackson, 46, with molesting a boy, conspiracy and administering an intoxicating agent, alcohol, to his alleged victim.

Investigators have carried out raids on Neverland, and in a recent court filing that seeks to introduce evidence of other purported crimes that went uncharged, prosecutors described the estate as "a veritable paradise" for children.

Friday's visitors, from six organizations and ranging in age from about 3 or 4 years to their teens, were bused to Neverland and then rode a train up from the parking lot.

Inmates to get holiday cheer from radio

WHITESBURG, Ky. (AP)—Inmates across the nation can receive some holiday cheer from faraway relatives through a radio call-in show that will be aired nationwide this year.

WMMT-FM in Whitesburg, which is popular among big-city inmates being held in isolated prisons in central Appalachia, will host a call-in show Monday so that people can offer Christmas wishes to inmates from Red Onion in Virginia and Folsom in California.

Prisoners also are invited to call in for the program, which is slated to run from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. EST.

The project is a public service to inmates who are being held in prisons hours from home and who might not otherwise receive a visit from relatives, said Nick Szuberla, a WMMT on-air

personality who helped produce the call-in show.

"The benefit to us is not monetary," Szuberla said. "This is not a commercially profitable venture. Part of the mission of the radio station is to give a voice to people who may not have a way to get their message heard."

More than 40 radio stations across the nation have enlisted to simulcast the call-in program, catering to inmates in prisons like Sing Sing in New York and Big Sandy in Kentucky. It will be the show's national debut.

Lorenzo McClean, an inmate at Wallens Ridge State Prison in Big Stone Gap, Va., said inmates appreciate the radio station's initiative.

"Thank you for looking at us as human beings," McClean said in an e-mail to the station.

WMMT's programming in-

cludes jazz, rhythm and blues, hip-hop, rap and other forms of urban music that appeals to prisoners who haven't developed a taste for the Nashville sound offered on most stations here.

The signal from WMMT, a 15,000-watt station, reaches six major prisons, including two super-maximum security institutions, and numerous jails in southeastern Kentucky and portions of Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

The simulcasts, via Pacifica Radio Network, will send the call-in program to prisons from coast to coast.

Amelia Kirby, co-founder of the project, said the show is always heartwarming, especially when she's able to connect inmates and family members who haven't seen each other in years.

'Sideways' director gets hometown honor

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—"Sideways" film director Alexander Payne received an honorary degree in humane letters from the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Payne, 43, who was born and raised in Omaha, was presented with the honorary degree at winter graduation ceremonies Friday. The university hosted a film festival honoring Payne's work last week.

"Sideways" received a leading seven Golden Globe nominations, including best comedy or musical film, best director for Payne and best screenplay for Payne and Jim Taylor.

Payne's feature film debut was "Citizen Ruth" in 1996, a satire about the abortion rights war. Payne also directed "Election" in 1999 and "About Schmidt" in 2002. All three movies were filmed in Nebraska.



Filmmaker Alexander Payne discusses his work at a symposium held at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Saturday, Dec. 18, 2004.

Man can lend a hand but not a dime to spendthrift brother

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I just read the letter from "Able but Unwilling in Alabama," whose mother and sister are urging him to "lend" money to his spendthrift brother. "Able" said he and his wife had always lived frugally and have saved diligently, while his brother and his wife lived far beyond their means. You responded that if "Able" was comfortable with his decision, he wouldn't have written to you.

He should stick to his guns. The brother and sister-in-law will be siphoning money from here to eternity. Just like an alcoholic, if you give money to folks like that, they'll take and take until the money is gone. I know -- I was one of those takers. I was never taught how to handle money.

I'll bet you get a lot of letters on that one, Abby!

HOPEFULLY DOING BETTER IN FLORIDA

DEAR DOING BETTER: You're right. I did get mail from readers who felt I should have encouraged the writer to stand firm. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: It's time for that brother and his wife to grow up and learn to budget their own money. If "Able's" mother and sister aren't willing to put THEIR money where their mouths are, they should keep quiet. It never makes sense to loan money to a bottomless pit.

Strange, how "Able," the responsible son, is criticized, while the spendthrift, spoiled son runs to Mom and Sis to lay guilt and put pressure on the responsible brother. If the situation were reversed, would the big spender help his brother, I wonder? I don't think so. His selfish lifestyle should not be rewarded. The irresponsible brother should end the pity party and go to work!

HARD-WORKING MOM IN PROVIDENCE, R.I.

DEAR HARD-WORKING MOM: More readers agreed with you than with me.

DEAR ABBY: The brother made his choices and is reaping the "rewards." If "Able" bails him out, it won't be a one-time thing. It will open the door to keep the money flowing. There is a children's story about the Little Red Hen. The little hen asked for help to plow the garden, plant the seed and pull the weeds. The rest of the farm animals refused. However, when it came time to eat the bread, they all wanted some. Little Red Hen then said "no," because they had done nothing to help.

It's the same with saving money; we go without to build savings to cover our needs in leaner times.

BRENDA IN AURORA, COLO.

DEAR BRENDA: That's a lesson many people need to learn. Too many are living on credit and accruing a mountain of debt while trying to keep up with the Joneses.

DEAR ABBY: "Able" should insist that his mother and sister co-sign the loan he gives to his brother. That way, if the brother doesn't repay, then they must! But first, that free-spending brother should downsize his expensive house, replace his luxury cars with subcompacts, sell all items that have no sentimental value, and both husband and wife should get out and look for jobs.

It is possible to be supportive of the brother without "Able" handing him money and possibly putting his own retirement at risk.

BEEN THERE, DONE THAT, IN WASHINGTON

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

Pastimes





TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS														
AMERICAN LEAGUE														
East Division														
	W	L	Pct.	GB										
New York	90	53	.629	-										
Boston	86	56	.606	31/2										
Baltimore	65	76	.461	24										
Tampa Bay	61	80	.433	28										
Toronto	59	84	.413	31										
Central Division														
Minnesota	82	60	.577	-										
Chicago	72	70	.507	10										
Cleveland	70	73	.490	121/2										
Detroit	64	77	.454	171/2										
Kansas City	51	91	.359	31										
West Division														
Oakland	83	59	.585	-										
Anaheim	81	61	.570	2										
Texas	78	64	.549	5										
Seattle	53	89	.373	30										
Yesterday's Games														
Minnesota 8, Detroit 5														
N.Y. Yankees 9, Baltimore 7														
Texas 7, Toronto 6														
Tampa Bay 7, Kansas City 2														
Seattle 2, Boston 0														
Anaheim 11, Chicago White Sox 0														
Oakland 1, Cleveland 0														
NATIONAL LEAGUE														
East Division														
Atlanta	84	58	.592	-										
Florida	74	65	.532	81/2										
Philadelphia	74	69	.517	101/2										
New York	61	81	.430	23										
Montreal	59	83	.415	25										
Central Division														
St. Louis	94	48	.662	-										
Chicago	76	64	.543	17										
Houston	78	66	.542	17										
Pittsburgh	66	77	.462	281/2										
Cincinnati	65	77	.458	29										
Milwaukee	62	79	.440	311/2										
West Division														
Los Angeles	83	59	.585	-										
San Francisco	79	65	.549	5										
San Diego	76	67	.531	71/2										
Colorado	62	80	.437	21										
Arizona	43	100	.301	401/2										
Yesterday's Games														
Atlanta 9, Montreal 8, 12 innings														
Philadelphia 4, N.Y. Mets 2														
Milwaukee 11, Cincinnati 0														
Florida 11, Chicago Cubs 1														
San Diego 15, Colorado 2														
St. Louis 7, Los Angeles 6														
San Francisco 5, Arizona 2														
Houston 5, Pittsburgh 4, 10 innings														
NFL STANDINGS														
AFC East					W	L	T	Pct.						
N.Y. Jets					1	0	0	1.000						
New England					1	0	0	1.000						
Buffalo					0	1	0	.000						
Miami					0	1	0	.000						
North														
Cleveland					1	0	0	1.000						
Pittsburgh					1	0	0	1.000						
Baltimore					0	1	0	.000						
Cincinnati					0	1	0	.000						
South														
Jacksonville					1	0	0	1.000						
Tennessee					1	0	0	1.000						
Houston					0	1	0	.000						
Indianapolis					0	1	0	.000						
West														
Denver					1	0	0	1.000						
San Diego					1	0	0	1.000						
Kansas City					0	1	0	.000						
Oakland					0	1	0	.000						
NFC East														
Philadelphia					1	0	0	1.000						
Washington					1	0	0	1.000						
Dallas					0	1	0	.000						
N.Y. Giants					0	1	0	.000						
North														
Detroit					1	0	0	1.000						
Minnesota					1	0	0	1.000						
Green Bay					0	0	0	.000						
Chicago					0	1	0	.000						
South														
Atlanta					1	0	0	1.000						
Carolina					0	0	0	.000						
New Orleans					0	1	0	.000						
Tampa Bay					0	1	0	.000						
West														
Seattle					1	0	0	1.000						
St. Louis					1	0	0	1.000						
Arizona					0	1	0	.000						
San Francisco					0	1	0	.000						
Yesterday's Games														
Detroit 20, Chicago 16														
N.Y. Jets 31, Cincinnati 24														
Pittsburgh 24, Oakland 21														
San Diego 27, Houston 20														
St. Louis 17, Arizona 10														
Washington 16, Tampa Bay 10														
Seattle 21, New Orleans 7														
Jacksonville 13, Buffalo 10														
Cleveland 20, Baltimore 3														
Atlanta 21, San Francisco 19														
Minnesota 35, Dallas 17														
Philadelphia 31, N.Y. Giants 17														
Denver 34, Kansas City 24														
BELL CANADIAN OPEN SCORES														
Final Round														
(x-Won on third playoff hole)														
x-Vijay Singh					68-66-72-69	275								
Mike Weir					68-65-70-72	275								
Joe Ogilvie					70-69-69-69	277								
Justin Rose					70-70-75-63	278								
Tom Lehman					74-70-70-64	278								
Hunter Mahan					72-69-69-68	278								
Stewart Cink					72-68-69-69	278								
Robert Dammron					72-71-70-66	279								
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Brett Quigley					69-71-73-72	285								
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Fred Funk					74-70-72-73	289								
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Garrett Willis					71-74-75-72	292								
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SPORTS TRANSACTIONS														
MLB														
SEATTLE MARINERS-Called up LHP Randy Williams from Tacoma of the PCL.														
NEW YORK METS-Placed RHP Matt Ginter on the 60-day DL. Recalled OF Victor Diaz from Norfolk of the IL.														
PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES-Activated RHP Kevin Millwood from the 15-day DL.														
NFL														
ATLANTA FALCONS-Waived S Etric Pruitt. Signed LB Terrence Melton from the practice squad.														
BUFFALO BILLS-Reached an injury settlement with QB Travis Brown.														
GREEN BAY PACKERS-Signed CB Al Harris to a five-year contract extension. Released TE Steve Bush.														
INDIANAPOLIS COLTS-Activated S Bob Sanders. Waived FB Cary Davis. Signed DT Jason Stewart to the practice squad.														
MIAMI DOLPHINS-Released RB Fred Russell from the practice squad. Signed RB Leonard Henry to the practice squad.														
MINNESOTA VIKINGS-Signed OT Mike Rosenthal to a six-year contract extension.														
OAKLAND RAIDERS-Activated CB Charles Woodson. Traded DT Chris Cooper to Dallas for future considerations.														
SAN FRANCISCO 49ERS-Waived TE Kevin Ware. Signed FB Matt Stanley from the practice squad.														
SEATTLE SEAHAWKS-Activated OT Walter Jones. Signed WR Jerheme Urban to the practice squad. Waived G Jerry Wunsch.														
By The Associated Press														

